



A place at the coast: Internal migration and the shift to the coastal-countryside

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Abstract: Thirty years ago a new trend in Australia's internal migration turned attention to the warm coastal-countryside. And yet it is only recently that much research attention has been focused on this coastal shift. This article reviews the material on internal migration in Australia, with a focus on New South Wales's mid-north coast which has experienced burgeoning new-settler populations since the 1970s. It suggests there is much to be done in ethnographic research on this population shift.

Key terms: Internal migration, population shift, coastal-countryside, Coffs Harbour, counterurbanisation, lifestyle.

Introduction

The north coast of New South Wales is bathed in mythic representations. A pivotal one is its construction as a land of plenty, with limitless natural resources and space for the new settler. Its romantic allure stretches widely - whether it be of alternative lifestyles tucked away in blue mountain valleys, a surfers' paradise of lonely breaks and unpolluted waters, or of family contentment on clean, white stretches of beach. It is an image of bounty and great spaciousness. Ian Evans' description of where he lived for a *Weekend Australian* series provides one example. Described as living 'in an old timber cottage in the country between Byron Bay and Mullumbimby on the NSW north coast', Ian said:

I enjoy sea-freshened air, a big sky with glorious sunsets and stars like diamonds on a velvet cloak, swimming in crystalline blue-green water from beaches that stretch to infinity, rainforest walks, the markets at Byron, Bangalow and Mullumbimby, buying fresh produce from the farm gate in rambling country lanes, nights filled with froggy sounds, the son et lumiere of sub-tropical storms viewed from the verandah, growing tropical fruit, knowing that the fish in my dam will reach plate size next year and being surrounded by bird life that ranges from tiny finches to black cockatoos.¹

During the economic boom times of the mid 1980s, images of bounty through financial prosperity were also encapsulated in promotions of the north coast. Coffs Harbour journalist Mike Secomb said:

The New Settlers now are not so much the dropouts from society as people who are choosing to remain part of society... They are people who want to work and enjoy the material benefits which result from their labour. So they

start businesses, develop markets for local products and create levels of services not previously present.²

From the early 1970s selected regions on New South Wales' rural north coast have experienced massive rates of incoming migration from other parts of Australia. Nationally, increases in population are second only to coastal Queensland.³ The shifting patterns of internal migration to attractive coastal-country areas over the past thirty years reflect national and international trends, and within Australia it has been witnessed and experienced by many of us. In 1996 it was reported that:

over the past twenty years, non-metropolitan coastal towns have grown much faster than the cities, with 95% of all population growth occurring in coastal statistical divisions in this period. Australian Bureau of Statistics projections indicate that about half of the total Australian population growth in the near future will be in coastal regions.⁴

However this migratory shift has been slow to gain research attention and in Australia it has only been fully recognised in the 1990s.⁵ In this paper I provide a survey of the research on internal migration to the coastal countryside and its urban centres. My focus is on the coastal city of Coffs Harbour, half way between Sydney and Brisbane on New South Wales' north coast. It experienced the highest growth rates in that state during the 1980s.

Processes of migration

Since the Second World War the pace of migration across the world has escalated momentarily. Histories and theories of migration have largely concentrated internationally on Europe, Britain and America, and in Australia such projects have predominantly concentrated on external, ethnically diverse migration into our metropolitan cities. There are very few extended histories of internal migration within Australia, especially with a focus on the shift of largely ethnically similar people into the warm coastal zones of eastern Australia in the postwar period.⁶

Referring to international migration patterns and consequences, Stephen Castles and Mark Millar describe the development of migratory networks, linking areas of origin and destination and helping bring about major changes in both: 'Migrations can change demographic, economic and social structures, and bring new cultural diversity'.⁷ This is no less true for internal migration.

In 1995 John Nieuwenhysen, Director of the Australian Federal Government's Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research, alluded to the recency of research concerned with internal migration in this country. Although research attention is regularly focused on immigration to Australia from overseas, he said, this 'should not overshadow the very large degree of internal mobility'.⁸ In their recent book *Population Shift: Mobility and Change in Australia*, Peter Newton and Martin Bell comment on the growing interest in population mobility in Australia in the 1990s, arguing for its significance in understanding social change:

The movements of people, products, services and information and the patterns they etch on the landscape are the artefacts of a deeper set of structural processes that relate to the changing locational needs and preferences of individuals, households, firms and governments. Similarly, shifts in the type, magnitude and patterns of movement reflect changes in these underlying structural forces- in the nature of consumption and production, in technology and in the political economy of the nation. Indeed,

shifts in patterns of mobility often represent the clearest indicators of underlying societal change.⁹

The above quotes fail to include the far-reaching consequences for the physical environments which bear the brunt of increasing populations.¹⁰ The entanglement of place - itself the enmeshing of the material, social and cultural - and migration are central to any investigation of the social, cultural and environmental consequences of the shift to the coastal-countryside.

Bell identifies four main phases of internal migration in Australia's history-post 1788. The first was the massive clockwise movement of populations across Australia following gold in the nineteenth century and the colonisation of agricultural frontiers. The second phase came in the interwar years where there were low levels of interstate movement but high rates of rural to urban migration. The Second World War to the late 1960s encompassed the third main phase, predicated on the development of the manufacturing sector and a second mineral boom. And the fourth phase emerged from the 1970s with the structural changes in industry of the transition from manufacturing to service industries, and a move to a leisure society. This is the period that has brought greater numbers of new settlers to the warm rural coastline.¹¹

Research on internal migration to the Second World War

Research and analyses of the first two phases of internal migration are found buried mainly within history texts and those of historical geography.¹² For example, one can find patterns of nineteenth century migration amongst the material on the squatters, shearers, shepherds and gold miners, but there is little which places internal migration as the specific focus. University of New England historian, John Atchison, has been involved in a large study on 'Patterns of Internal Migration in Inland Rural Australia 1851-1914' to fill a gap in the historical literature of place and people. 'There is, as you are aware', he wrote to me in August 2000, 'very little on internal migration'.¹³

These histories have been predominantly, if not exclusively, focused on white, male subjects as if they were the only people 'out there'.¹⁴ Work on women and gender, Aboriginal and non-Anglo settlers have therefore, until recently, been discussed separately.¹⁵ One can find gendered patterns of population movement enunciated in the work on colonial families.¹⁶ Population movements of Aboriginal people through to the Second World War can be found in anthropological and historical studies.¹⁷ This work traces movement around the rural areas within states, and rural-urban movements in the pre and post-war periods. Published Aboriginal oral accounts tell of extensive movement around the north coast, especially escalating during and after the Second World War.¹⁸

Patterns of non-Anglo experience in Australia prior to the 1940s are predominantly focused on the nineteenth century racist policies against Asian and Pacific Islanders and their histories.¹⁹ Less has been written about the patterns of non-Anglo European internal migration. Prior to the 1960s, pockets of non-Anglo migrants went to rural areas, where they bought up struggling properties in intensive agriculture such as banana farming.²⁰ On the north coast the large Italian population which settled at New Italy, south-east of Lismore, has had some research attention, but little has been written of the Italians who came to settle the banana plantations in Coffs Harbour from the 1930s.²¹ Marie DeLeparvanche's anthropological study of the predominantly Punjabi Indians who took up banana farming in Woolgoolga, just

north of Coffs Harbour, is the only substantial study of this large non-Anglo group outside the metropolis.²²

The north coast of New South Wales has been promoted as a land of plenty, with room for ever-more new settlers since the end of the nineteenth century. However the main direction of internal migration throughout most of the twentieth century was out of the north coast and into Sydney. Some of the most strident comment on this direction of internal migration can be found within the political material of the New South Wales Country Party from its inception in the 1920s, and its later historians.²³

Moving to the coast: new patterns of internal migration

Looking to Bell's third phase of mobility, the balance of migration was still firmly tipped in favour of out-migration from the rural north coast throughout the 1960s. However there were changes afoot on the immediate coastline. For example the town of Coffs Harbour saw its population grow slowly but steadily from the Second World War through its port and railhead activities, and new settlers seeking business potential.

Even by the late 1950s it was the leisure trade that was coming to interest fledgling entrepreneurs of the north coast. The first urban subdivisions north of Coffs Harbour, to house hoped-for new settlers, were planned and built in the early 1960s. The Geography Department and the Department of Adult Education at the University of New England produced a number of research reports and conference proceedings from the late 1950s on tourist and permanent new settlement along the north coast. These discussed the potential consequences for the region of population growth.²⁴ Pressures of holiday and permanent settlement on New South Wales's south coast, and areas close to Sydney, had already been felt from the 1950s and the positive potentials, or horrors, of the Gold Coast to the north were already being debated.²⁵

The population 'turnaround' experienced from 1970, part of Bell's fourth phase, has brought the greatest impact to Australia's southern and eastern coastlines. For the first time in the twentieth century, some non-metropolitan areas grew more rapidly than the capital cities. The authors who have written on this turn in internal migration are population geographers, sociologist, economists and planners. Most of this work, so far, is macro-level data analysis based on census figures since 1971 and questionnaire surveys.²⁶ Except in some work on retirement, there has been little in-depth ethnographic research on the migration patterns which have brought people back to the coastal-countryside in the postwar period.

Four major patterns of population redistribution in this period are widely agreed upon, differing in intensity over time. Bell identifies them as a movement away from the southern states towards the north and the west, especially to Queensland²⁷: net losses from the interior; counterurbanisation and suburbanisation.²⁸

The first three have all impacted on growth in the Coffs Harbour area, with suburbanisation of the area being an outcome. While the vast majority of new settlers to Coffs originate from Sydney and other parts of New South Wales,²⁹ the 1970s and 80s also saw a strong contingent of southerners (pejoratively known as 'Mexicans') from Victoria.³⁰ Further, the continuing net population loss from New South Wales' interior has not only gone to Sydney, but also to adjacent non-metropolitan coastal centres.³¹ For example, Coffs Harbour's share of this coastwards migration has traditionally come from Tamworth to Armidale.

From the city to the coastal countryside: counterurbanisation

Counterurbanisation has been a major contributor to population redistribution since the 1970s. This is the 'turnaround' discussed above, where the long established concentration of populations into metropolitan areas was overtaken by a net growth into less densely settled, non-metropolitan areas.³² However, even in its heights of the 1970s and early 80s, it has only been a partial redistribution. It has not seen the diminution of the loss of many inland populations, and has increasingly concentrated to attractive country-coastal and river locations and near-metropolitan areas.³³ Also, internal migration patterns within areas such as the north coast have not been one way. Levels of out-migration of young people of working age have remained high. There continues a relentless movement of all ages in and out of the region.³⁴

International literature on counterurbanisation is extensive, as the phenomenon has been more widespread across America and Europe.³⁵ The research of American geographer, Brian Berry, is often cited as the first major work on counterurbanisation. He concluded that a fundamental shift in population distribution in America occurred around 1970. About the same time, the European Commission was also funding research on similar migration trends.³⁶

In reviewing the early literature on counterurbanisation, British geographer Tony Fielding argued that while these migration trends were similar in virtually all advanced capitalist nations, there were substantially different explanations. American authors tended to follow Berry's explanation of it as the will of individual, 'ordinary' people to leave the large cities in preference for the environments of rural and small-town living. On the other hand, European explanations tended to follow the structural arguments of regional development that focused on shifting capitalist relations of power.³⁷

While all Australian commentators cited here agree in hindsight that the process had also begun in Australia in some places from the early 1970s, it went largely undiscussed through to the later 1980s. While the unexpectedness of this turnaround is commented on, no one provides a direct explanation for why it took so long to be noticed as significant to understanding social and economic restructuring.³⁸ No doubt it is due to a combination of effects. These include the general lack of interest and research in the Australian countryside, outside of its mythic representations, until recently. Also the out-migration from the metropolitan cities was not noticeable through the 1970s. International and rural in-migration retained those places' overwhelming historical population concentrations.³⁹

Some Australian authors also emphasise that the 'turnaround' has not had the same intensity or widespread impact as experienced in America and Europe in the 1970s and 80s.⁴⁰ Their research shows that counterurbanisation has not been the uniform phenomena across capitalist nations suggested by Fielding. Australia's geography and settler-history has produced important differences that have resulted in the ongoing heavy concentration of populations in the coastal-metropolitan cities. However this argument should not diminish the enormous impact on those areas where the 'turnaround' has occurred in Australia, such as on the eastern settled coastline and near-metropolitan areas.

The recent interest has meant that Australian research has been able to tap into the longer international history of analysis, plus reviewing two decades of statistical data in Australia, resulting in a generally less dichotomised debate than outlined by Fielding.⁴¹ Authors offer a variety of explanations for causes of the turnaround. These include the centrality of economic structural change that has seen the growth in service industries less tied to the major cities; improvements in transport; portable

communication technologies; the development of a leisure society that has encouraged lifestyle choices to attractive coastal areas; a dissatisfaction with city living including perceptions of greater safety and healthier living in the county; increased affluence that has allowed greater mobility; portability of social security benefits and cheaper living in regional centres; and new choices in retirement options amongst the growing population of the aged.⁴²

Lifestyle choice or welfare-retreat from the city?

A further consequence of the recent interest means we know the trends of counterurbanisation in Australia are not homogenous across the period. Different patterns of migration have now been discerned across the period from the 1970s to the 1990s. For example there has been a spatial differentiation. The 1970s saw a broader spatial distribution of new settlers moving into rural areas as hobby farmers, rural retreaters and alternative lifestylers, later shrinking back to selective urban, predominantly coastal centres.

The alternative counter-culture movement is the most famous amongst those groups of the 1970s moving into the north coast hinterland, taking up rural properties left by dairy farmers in their losing battle with rural restructuring. They brought the most obvious cultural diversity into the region, but have had very little academic attention. Peter Cock, who has written one of the few ethnographic accounts of their experiences, argues this is because it happened outside of the city and hence away from the interests of city academics.⁴³

Graeme Hugo argues in general terms (following Bell) that in the hey-day of the 1970s counterurbanisation, the net gains of migrants to growing non-metropolitan areas were employed, predominantly middle-class people. However from the early 1980s and escalating in the 90s, the net gains have overwhelmingly been amongst the retired, the unemployed and others outside the labour force.⁴⁴ In the recent literature published about these migration trends, there is increasing focus on welfare-led migration from the metropolitan cities to regional centres such as Coffs Harbour.⁴⁵

Ongoing economic restructuring resulting in the lack or loss of jobs, escalating house prices and high cost of living, are cited in this literature as the main reasons for moving out.⁴⁶ A growing geographical divide of winners and losers is argued to be growing between the concentration of high status jobs in the metropolitan cities, especially Sydney, compared to lower status jobs in the regional cities based on service industries in the community, retail and tourism sectors. While an important historical perspective on counterurbanisation is being brought to bear, such generalisations also hide the complexity and diversity within and between regions, and the focus and interpretation of data. Large numbers of the employed have continued to move to the coast in the 1980s and 90s, just as the unemployed were already moving out of the cities in the 1970s.⁴⁷

Retirees have been a major cohort of migrants to the coast. Research on the characteristics of retirement on the north coast suggest some differentiation in choice of region, with more older people migrating to Port Macquarie and Ballina than Coffs Harbour.⁴⁸ This pattern does not, however, deny the substantial population of retirees to the Coffs Harbour region, and again blurs the differences between the neighbouring communities of Sawtell, Coffs Harbour and Emerald Beach in the Coffs Harbour shire, each with different demographic profiles.⁴⁹ Little research has as yet been carried out on these intra-regional differences. The 1970s and early

80s may have seen a greater percentage of young retirees. However, overall the research shows that most coastal retirees are able bodied and middle class, reflecting international trends.⁵⁰

Internal migration and 'race'

One thing which has remained constant over the whole period is that the migrants moving to the coast across all ages have been overwhelmingly 'white', Anglo-Australians.⁵¹ The lack of analysis of this is particularly noticeable in the retirement literature on the coast, partly because this is one of the only areas where some in-depth research on a particular group has been carried out.⁵² For example Peter Murphy and Robert Zehner's article on their research on retirees in Port Macquarie, 'Satisfaction with Sunbelt Migration', makes no mention of this. However anecdotal evidence from Port Macquarie indicates that for some older people, their satisfaction is linked to the town's perceived ethnic homogeneity - a place predominantly of white people, especially 'no Asians'.⁵³ Theoretical work on whiteness as a colour/race issue is entirely lacking.⁵⁴

An understanding of the spatial mobility of Aboriginal populations also remains 'woefully inadequate'.⁵⁵ In 1996 John Taylor and Martin Bell commented:

a good deal is known about the non-indigenous population in respect of their propensity to move and spatial redistribution, whereas knowledge of movement propensities for the indigenous population is virtually nil while that concerning spatial redistribution is restricted mostly to case studies of urbanisation.⁵⁶

Their article argues that whereas there is greater quantitative analysis on the macro-level of non-Aboriginal movement and less on detailed patterns, the opposite is true for the Aboriginal population, due in part to the ethnographic focus of much research. However, given that essentially the same data since the 1971 census have been available for comprehensive analysis of population mobility for both groups, they suggest that the limited focus on indigenous issues is 'striking'.⁵⁷

Indigenous people in settled Australia have also been highly mobile in the post-war period, although often not in the same patterns of flow as non-indigenous migrants.⁵⁸ A greater understanding of Aboriginal mobility is not only important for adequate planning of services and programs. It also has far reaching consequences in understanding the histories of places like Coffs Harbour, where many local Aboriginal people are also internal migrants from other parts of the north coast and inland.

The motivations for Aboriginal migration on the north coast have some similarities and vast differences to non-Aboriginal migrants. Similarities include the gravitation to centres of employment, proximity to social services and following family. However these stand alongside entirely different histories of enforced migration through government policies and racist exclusive community actions.⁵⁹

It is now thirty years since the warm coastal-countryside of Australia first experienced a shift in internal migration patterns. Throughout the 1970s and early 1980s, the local Coffs Harbour press continued to celebrate this shift in uncritical tones. In 1982 the *Advocate* stated that the 'phenomenal population growth' to the area since the early 1970s was '...one of history's great migration stories' after the nineteenth century gold rush.⁶⁰

However, by the late 1980s this optimistic attitude to the high rate of population growth was confronted by a range of issues. Simmering concerns over high unemployment rates, rapid land subdivision, tensions between development and conservation on the coast, a shifting tourism industry, and debates over sustainable population numbers in the face of struggles around water and sewage infrastructure, were all coming to the forefront of public debate. The impact of these challenges will continue to be influenced by the shifting migration patterns. Their effects will only be determined by combining the ongoing statistical analysis with a strong injection of much needed ethnographic research.

Endnotes

¹ Ian Evans *Weekend Australian* March 21/2, 1998:17.

² Mike Secomb reported in Coffs Harbour City Council (1988) *Coffs Harbour Annual Report of the Year 1987: Coffs Harbour Bicentennial Activities*, Showcase Publications, St Leonards, p54.

³ Martin Bell (1995) *Internal Migration in Australia 1986-1991: Overview Report*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra; D.J.Walmsley, W.R Epps and C.J. Duncan (1995) *The New South Wales North Coast 1986-1991: Who Moved where, Why and with What Effect?*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra.

⁴ Neil Hamilton and Doug Cocks (1996) 'Coastal Growth and the Environment' in Peter Newton and Martin Bell eds. *Population Shift: Mobility and Change in Australia*, Australian Government Publishing Service Press, Canberra, p.183.

⁵ In evidence of this Terry Burke says: 'In the 1980s no Commonwealth government department was charged with analysis of, or apparently even appeared concerned with, the spatial implications of economic and social change. Only in the 1990s has there been any awareness that economic restructuring has significant spatial implications'. Terry Burke (1996) 'Inter-regional migration' in Peter Newton and Martin Bell eds. *Population Shift: Mobility and Change in Australia*, Australian Government Publishing Service Press, Canberra.

⁶ See Bernard Salt's recent book (2001) *The Big Shift: Welcome to the Third Australian Culture. The Bernard Salt Report*, Hardie Grant Books, South Yarra.

⁷ Stephen Castles and Mark Miller (1993) *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, Macmillan Press, Houndmills, p.3.

⁸ Foreword to Bell 1995:iii.

⁹ Peter Newton and Martin Bell (1996) 'Mobility and Change: Australia in the 1990s' in their *Population Shift: Mobility and Change in Australia*, Australian Government Publishing Service Press, Canberra, p.1.

¹⁰ see Hamilton and Cocks 1996.

¹¹ Bell 1995:72.

¹² For general accounts see historians Geoffrey Bolton (1981) *Spoils and Spoilers: Australians make their environment 1788-1980*, George Allen & Unwin, Sydney; A. W. Martin (1987) 'The Country' in Ann Curthoys, A.W.Martin and Tim Rowse eds. *Australians From 1939*, Fairfax, Syme & Weldon, Sydney, pp 99-117; historical geographer J.M.Powell (1976) *Environmental Management in Australia 1788-1914*.

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¹³ John Atchison pers. com. 21/8/00.

¹⁴ Kay Saunders and Raymond Evans (1992) *Gender Relations in Australia: Domination and Negotiation*, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, Sydney.

¹⁵ For example see Patricia Grimshaw, Marilyn Lake, Ann McGrath and Marian Quartly (1994) *Creating A Nation*, McPhee Gribble, Penguin Books, Victoria.

¹⁶ See Patricia Grimshaw, Chris McConville and E. McEwen eds (1988) *Families in Colonial Australia*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney.

¹⁷ For example Jeremy Beckett (1958) 'Marginal Men: A Study of Two Half Caste Aborigines' in *Oceania*, XXIX, pp 91-108; Heather Goodall (1996) *Invasion to Embassy: Land in Aboriginal Politics in New South Wales, 1770-1972*. Allen&Unwin; Marie Reay ed. (1964) *Aborigines Now: New Perspectives in the Study of Aboriginal Communities*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney; Diane Barwick (1962) 'Economic absorption without assimilation? The Case of some Melbourne part-Aboriginal families' in *Oceania*, 38(1), pp18-23 and (1971) 'Changes in the Aboriginal Population of Victoria, 1863-1966' in D. J. Mulvaney and J. Golson (eds) *Aboriginal Man and Environment in Australia*, Australian National University Press, Canberra; Fay Gale (1988) 'Urbanisation' in James Jupp (ed) *The Australian People: An Encyclopedia of the Nation, Its People and Their Origins*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney.

¹⁸ For example Della Walker (1989) *Me and You: The Life of Della Walker*, as told to Tina Coutts, Aboriginal Studies Press, Canberra. Bill Cohen (1987) *To My Delight: The autobiography of Bill Cohen. A grandson of the Gumbangarri*, Aboriginal Studies Press, Canberra. Alice Becker (nd) *Grace Roberts: Her Life Her Mystery Her Dreaming*, Northern Rivers College Press, Lismore; Ruby Langford (1994) *My Bundjalung People*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia.

¹⁹ For example A. T. Yarwood and M. J. Knowling (1982) *Race Relations in Australia*, North Ryde; Raymond Evans, Kay Saunders and Katherine Cronin (1975) *Exclusion, Exploitation and Extermination: Race Relations in Colonial Queensland*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia.

²⁰ Ian Burnely (1985) 'Constraints and opportunities in the ecology of immigrant settlement' in Millecent Poole, Philip de Lacey and Bikkar Randhawa eds. *Australia in Transition: Culture and life possibilities*, HJB, North Ryde, pp 141-147.

²¹ Lesley Jenkins, *Power of the Land/Il Potere Della Terra: A Social History of Italian Settlement in Lismore/Una storia delle attivita dell Ćinsediamento Italiano di Lismore* Northern Star Printery, Lismore, 1993.

²² Marie deLepervanche (1984) *Indians in a White Australia: An account of race, class and Indian immigration to eastern Australia*, George Allen & Unwin, Sydney. A grant from the Commonwealth Centenary of Federation Project in 1999 was awarded to the Woolgoolga Neighbourhood Centre which is currently writing a history of Indian settlement in the area.

²³ Material on the Country Party led New State Movement; Don Aitkin (1972) *The Country Party in New South Wales*, Australian National University Press, Canberra; Brian Costar and Dennis Woodward (1985) *Country to National: Australian Rural Politics and Beyond*. George Allen and Unwin, Sydney.

²⁴ For example a series of reports by Barbara Hannah on the north coast; Barbara Hannah (1968a) *Land Use of the North coast of New South Wales*, Research Series in Applied Geography No 15, September, Department of Geography, University of New England; (1968b) *The Landscapes of the North Coast of New South Wales*, Research Series in Applied Geography No 14, June, Department of Geography, University of New England; (1968c) *The North Coast of New South Wales: Preservation, Conflict and Potential*, Research Series in Applied Geography No 16, September, Department of Geography, University of New England.

²⁵ See Nicolas Brown (1996) 'A Place at the Coast' in *Eureka Street*, 6(9), pp 42-44 and Gwen Piper (1980) *My One Fourteen Millionth Share*, Temnor Publications, West Ryde on the south coast; and the Department of Adult Education UNE (1959) *Proceedings of Conference 'Planning for Tourist Development on the North Coast' Grafton-August 7,8,9 1959*, Clarence Regional Office, Department of Adult Education University of New England on northern developments.

²⁶ John Taylor and Martin Bell (1996) 'Mobility among Indigenous Australians' in Peter Newton and Martin Bell eds. *Population Shift: Mobility and Change in Australia*, Australian Government Publishing Service Press, Canberra, pp 392-411.

²⁷ A similar movement to the West has slowed in the late 1980s.

²⁸ Bell 1995; Newton and Bell 1996.

²⁹ In the 1986-91 period 90% came from New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, Walmsley et al 1995.

³⁰ T. Shelaimoff (1986) *Sunbelt Migration: Coffs Harbour Shire Immigration Survey*, Department of Environment and Planning, Sydney.

³¹ Bell 1995; Walmsely et al 1995.

³² Graeme Hugo (1996) 'Counterurbanisation' in Peter Newton and Martin Bell eds. *Population Shift: Mobility and Change in Australia*, Australian Government Publishing Service Press, Canberra, pp 126-146 referring to Champion 1989.

³³ Hugo 1996; Bell 1995; H. C. Weinand and D.A.M Lea (1990) 'The Movers and the Stayers: Changes in Population in Northeastern NSW' in D. J. Walmsley ed. (1990) *Change and Adjustment in Northern NSW*, Department of Geography and Planning, University of New England, Armidale.

³⁴ Weinand and Lea 1990.

³⁵ For example see the edited collections of A.G.Champion, ed. (1989) *Counterurbanisation: The Changing Pace and Nature of Population Deconcentration*, Edward Arnold, London; Boyle Peter and Keith Halfacree eds. (1998) *Migration into Rural Areas: Theories and Issues*, John Wiley & Sons, Chichester.

³⁶ Tony Fielding (1998) 'Counterurbanisation and social class' in Peter Boyle and Keith Halfacree eds. *Migration into Rural Areas: Theories and Issues*, John Wiley & Sons, Chichester, pp 41-60; Walmsely et al 1995.

³⁷ Fielding 1998. His extensive class-based analysis of counterurbanisation in England/Europe in the 1980s is widely cited in the international literature.

³⁸ Walmsley et al 1995.

³⁹ Don Rowland (1996) 'Migration of the Aged' in Peter Newton and Martin Bell eds. *Population Shift: Mobility and Change in Australia*, Australian Government Publishing Service Press, Canberra, pp 348-363; Burnley 1988.

⁴⁰ Weinand and Lea 1990.

⁴¹ See Bell 1995.

⁴² Martin Bell (1992) *Internal Migration in Australia 1981-1986*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra; 1995; Hugo 1989, 1996; Burnley 1998 and on the north coast [of NSW-ed] see Walmsley 1990.

⁴³ Peter Cock (1976) *Alternative Australia: Communities of the Future*, Quartet, Melbourne.

⁴⁴ Hugo 1996.

⁴⁵ Bob Birrell (1999) 'Residential Relocation in Sydney and the NSW Coast Over the Period 1991 to 1996' in *People and Place*, 7(2), pp 33- 43; Maryann Wulff and Martin Bell (1997) *Internal Migration, Social Welfare and Settlement Patterns: Impacts on Households and Communities*, Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, Canberra; Hugo, Graeme and Martin Bell (1998) 'The hypothesis of welfare-led migration to rural areas: the Australian case' in Peter Boyle and Keith Halfacree eds. *Migration into Rural Areas: Theories and Issues*, John Wiley & Sons, Chichester, pp 107-133.

⁴⁶ Wulff and Bell 1997. While it may only now be appearing in the literature, many people living in Coffs Harbour would argue that this phenomena of those often know as the 'urban refugees' has long been observed and hardly a surprise.

⁴⁷ For example see Walmsely et al 1995 for high rates of employed migrants moving to Coffs Harbour in the period 1986-1991. However the fact that they did not interview any households without a phone would have narrowed their survey away from welfare recipients. Also see Ian Burnley's 1988 discussion of the turnaround out of Sydney in the 1970s where he notes it was obvious that the unemployed were heading out of the metropolitan area. One of the emphases of his article was to point out that traditional models of internal migration arguing that migration followed employment opportunities were no longer valid. The destinations of migrants to the north coast were known to be experiencing very high unemployment rates.

⁴⁸ Peter Murphy and Robert Zehner (1988) 'Satisfaction with sunbelt migration' in *Australian Geographical Studies*, 26(2), pp 320-334; Walmsley et al 1995.

⁴⁹ Sherlaimoff 1986; Edmund Lawrence Munday (1998) *Submission of EIS for Emerald Beach Earthworks, Waterbody System and Residential Development*, Pridel Investments Pty Ltd, Maclean; Coffs Harbour City Council (1994) *Population Profile* Coffs Harbour City Council.

⁵⁰ Peter Murphy (1981) 'Patterns of coastal retirement migration' in Anna Howe ed. *Towards an Older Australia: Readings in Social Gerontology*, University of Queensland Press, pp 301-314; Murphy and Zehner 1988; Don Rowland (1996) 'Migration of the Aged' in Peter Newton and Martin Bell eds. *Population Shift: Mobility and Change in Australia*, Australian Government Publishing Service Press, Canberra, pp 348-363; Beth Neyland and Hal Kendig (1996) 'Retirement Migration to the Coast' in Peter Newton and Martin Bell eds. *Population Shift: Mobility and Change in Australia*, Australian Government Publishing Service Press, Canberra, pp 364-377.

⁵¹ Recent trends have shown more well-established English-speaking European migrants moving north. See Bell 1995; Wulff and Bell 1997.

⁵² Murphy 1981; Murphy and Zehner 1988; Rowland 1996; Neyland and Kendig 1996.

⁵³ This was strongly argued by observations from Port Macquarie students in my classes at Southern Cross University 1996 -1998.

⁵⁴ Analysis of One Nation politics in a place like Port Macquarie where there was both very strong support and also challenge will be productive.

⁵⁵ Allen, Altman and Owen in Taylor and Bell 1996, p 392.

⁵⁶ Taylor and Bell 1996, p 394.

⁵⁷ Ibid, p 395.

⁵⁸ For example, while there has also been a rural-urban flow, there has been much less interstate movement than among non-indigenous people, and intra-state movements have often been quite different (see Taylor and Bell 1996).

⁵⁹ Heather Goodall (1996) *Invasion to Embassy: Land in Aboriginal Politics in New South Wales, 1770-1972*. Allen & Unwin.

⁶⁰ *Advocate* 2/12/82.

Note on the author: Jo made the shift to Coffs Harbour in 1995 to lecture in History and Australian Studies at Southern Cross University, Coffs Harbour campus. Having returned to the south, she is currently completing her PhD exploring a history of contested claims of belonging to places on NSW's mid-north coast. She edited a book of local histories with two of her students, called *Past Lives Fresh Views: Histories of the Mid-North Coast of New South Wales* and has recently completed a book of interviews *Changing Places: Stories of Coffs Harbour's Transforming Countryside*.